



The Bed Room Window.

KALT. Ah!-Is it possible, Bertha, is it you? -

CAPT. CASIMIR. Zounds!-This is the very girl herself, and Kalts intended too! -

Duncombe's Edition.

THE BED-ROOM WINDOW!

A FARCE,
723827 A
IN

One Act.

BY E. STIRLING, Esq.

*Author of Industry and Indolence, The Rag Picker of Paris, The
Anchor of Hope The Buffalo Girls, Kissing goes by favour,
Battle of Life, Lilly Dawson, Baby Rattler, Hand of Cards,
Aline, Captain Charlotte, Bachelors' Buttons, On the Tiles,
Blue Jackets, Popping in and out, Lestelle, Margaret
Catchpole, Norah Creina, Little Back Parlour,
Secret Fee, &c. &c.*

THE ONLY EDITION CORRECTLY MARKED, BY PERMISSION,
FROM THE PROMPTER'S BOOK.

To which is added,

A DESCRIPTION OF THE COSTUME—CAST OF THE CHARACTERS—
THE WHOLE OF THE STAGE BUSINESS,
SITUATIONS—ENTRANCES—EXITS—PROPERTIES, AND
DIRECTIONS.

AS PERFORMED AT THE
London Theatres.

EMBELLISHED WITH A FINE ENGRAVING
By Mr. Findlay, from a Drawing, taken expressly in the Theatre.

LONDON:
PUBLISHED BY DUNCOMBE AND MOON,
17, HOLBORN BARS.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

<i>Baron de Reischach</i>	Mr. Turner
<i>Casimir Wenzel, his Nephew</i>	Mr. Kinloch
<i>Joseph Kalt, a Soldier</i>	Mr. L. Thompson
<i>Franz, a Peasant</i>	Mr. Buxton
<i>Andre, a Soldier</i>	Mr. Pidgeon
<i>Bertha</i>	Miss Hamilton
<i>Clara</i>	Miss Bromley

SCENE—A Village in the Tyrol.

First produced at the Royal Olympic Theatre, March 18, 1847
Time in Representation— 40 minutes.

COSTUME.

Baron—Dark blue military square cut coat with scarlet collar, cuffs and facings, gold lace sash, white breeches, high boots, small cocked hat with feather, trimmings, gold epaulettes, and powdered head.

Casimir—Green military jacket and pantaloons, and hat, all trimmed with gold eagle's plume in hat, red and gold military sash, sword and cross belt.

Kalt—Same as Casimir, only plain, trimmed with yellow worsted lace, &c.

Andre—Ditto.

Franz—Yellow Swiss breeches, brown body, shirt sleeves, striped stockings, shoes and buckles, white Swiss hat, long red hair, &c.

Bertha—Swiss skirt, brown, blue and red, edged with narrow gold lace, black velvet body, richly trimmed with silver, white Swiss hat with blue ribbons, &c.

Clara—Ditto, blue, white and pink, black velvet, Swiss hat, pink ribbons, &c.

THE BED-ROOM WINDOW.

SCENE.

A Swiss Village, in the Tyrol. L. H. Bertha's House—the bed-room window on the first floor. R. H. the gates of a mansion. Set bridge running off, U. E. L. H.

Previous to the rising of the Curtain, a distant march is heard, which is continued till BERTHA and CLARA enter from the house.

Ber. Yes, cousin, I'm certain it was military music I heard in the valley yonder—and what's better still, I know it was our riflemen's march.

Clara. What, could you distinguish it at such a distance?

Ber. The ear is quick, cousin, when the heart listens. But one thought occupies me now—the return of my betrothed from his three years service. It was merely to have the pleasure of seeing him a few hours earlier, that I came hither on a visit to my grandmother.

Clara. And since you have been here, every day has brought its hopes and disappointments.

Ber. True. My heart has beaten high at the sound of the drum, and still it brought him not—yet these very disappointments are perhaps for the best—but for their relief I might be devoured with the vapours.

Clara. You a victim to the vapours? Why, you are singing from morning till night.

Ber. The songs he taught me.

Clara. You dance at all our fêtes.

Ber. It was his wish. Full of life and spirits, he hates your melancholy mopers. (*Adjusting herself.*) If I take pains with myself, it's to please him. His last words to me were, "Keep up your spirits, Bertha, and let me find you on my return as gay and as good-looking as ever!" Oh, I'm not like you, Clara—I don't take delight in crossing and annoying Joseph, as you do poor Franz. No, no—let him come when he will, he'll find me ready. I'm of age, and it's high time I was married.

Clara. Well, perhaps it is—you were near upon it three years ago.

Ber. Yes, but his father, who was then living, said we were too young, as if happiness and youth could not go hand in hand together. So, as we were to wait three years, Joseph enlisted for that period, just to pass away the time. Thank goodness, it has been up some days now, and—

Franz. (*Capering on, U. E. L. H.*) Hurra! hurrah! Here they are! here they are!—Good morning, Miss Clara. Up so early, and such a way from home, too! I'm astonished—I'm delighted—I'm—

Clara. (*Slaps his face.*) You're a fool!

Ber. You are tantalizing. At all events, you come running to us with "Hurrah! Here they are!" and don't say a word about *who* they are

Franz. Why, don't you know, then? Who should they be but our brave riflemen, of the Tyrol, to be sure.

Ber. (*Aside.*) How my heart beats!

Franz. I said here they are, but they are not exactly *here*—they are *there*—they halted at the end of the valley to spruce themselves up, before they march into the town.

Ber. (*R. C.*) He looks as well as ever, doesn't he? He told you he had been faithful to me, and you told him that my love grew stronger every day?

Franz. Lord bless you! not a word of the kind.

Ber. No?

Franz. No—we haven't spoke yet.

Ber. You haven't seen him, then?

Franz. Yes, I saw him plainly enough, and shook hands with him at a distance—so. The sentinels would not allow us to go near. They only halt in the village one day—tomorrow they'll be on the march again.

Ber. The others, but not my husband. The Captain who enlisted Kalt, gave his word of honour to discharge him at the end of the term, and he shall too, if I apply to the General myself, who has lodged in that mansion these three days past.

Franz. The Baron de Reisbach—I know him—the strictest officer in the service. The other day, I had a little discussion with him on a point of discipline, but I stood no chance—he beat me off hand—his arguments were so striking (*Rubs his shoulders.*)

Ber. (*To Clara, who looks thoughtful.*) Well, Clara, what is the matter with you?

Clara. Nothing—I was thinking.

Franz. Of what?

Clara. (*Down.*) What's that to you?

Franz. Oh, nothing.

Ber. If you don't mind, you'll be too late for the wedding—you've a good hour's walk to go home.

Franz. Are you going home? How lucky. If you'll take my arm, we'll go together.

Clara. I'd just as soon go alone—I don't care how it is. (*Going, and exit L. H.*)

Franz. Thank you for the preference. (*General heard behind, over the bridge.*) Hollo! here comes the General. If he knew I'm not at my post, he might resume the discussion we had together the other day. (*Misses Clara.*) Why, where is she? Clara! Miss Clara! (*Exit after her.*)

Ber. What can have happened to make her so unusually thoughtful? Well, I'll in and set the house in order against Joseph's return. (*Exit L. H.*)

Enter BARON DE REISBACH, with CASIMIR WENZEL, R.

Ber. Not another word, Captain—not a word. It's my pleasure to keep you under arrest till to-morrow—I have so said, and so let it be done.

Cas. (*R. C.*) But for what, General? My company, I am proud to say, behaved well in the field. I return when the campaign is over, and my first salute is to be ordered under arrest without a cause.

Ber. Without a cause? Tell me, young man, where did you pass the night?

Cas. (*Aside.*) The devil! Can he have found out?

Ber. You said nothing but the interests of the service should call you from home.

Cas. (*Aside.*) I must risk a lie. (*Aloud.*) And I kept my word. Obligated to precede my company hither, I was anxious about their conduct, and wished to insure order, by the authority of my presence.

Ber. Indeed! Then why return?

Cas. I left instructions with my lieutenants. Besides, Kalt is there to set them a good example. He not only respects discipline, but submits with so good a grace, as to make others respect it also.

Ber. He's a valuable man, then.

Kalt. (*Without.*) Right about! Quick march!

Ber. Heyday! what have we here? A Tyrolean rifleman brought by two militia men?

Cas. (*Looking off.*) Why, it's Joseph Kalt.

Ber. The man of whose discipline you were just now boasting. The soldiers were ordered not to enter the town. He is taken, no doubt, in the act of breaking his consign. He shall be punished.

me into fury—I would have fought for a word, a look, a mere nothing.

Cas. The devil! Are you so jealous, then?

Kalt. Jealous? Look you, Captain—it was only because I had no right over her. Give me that, let me but become her husband, and away at once with jealousy.

Cas. Then pray get married at once—till that takes place, you'll be a dangerous subject.

Kalt. I shan't delay, never fear—but I'm sorry you can't assist at the ceremony—you would have been delighted. It is not every lover that is as jealous as I am, and we've some deuced pretty girls hereabouts, I can tell you, Captain.

Cas. I can save you that trouble, and tell you as much myself.

Kalt. What already?

Cas. Why, I've been here twenty-four hours, and it is just on this subject that I wanted to speak to you. I dare say you can afford me the information I need.

Kalt. If so, it shall be at your service.

Cas. Yesterday, one of my comrades, an officer, met a charming little devil, a young girl, near the town-hall—

Kalt. And followed her, of course?

Cas. Just as he was about to speak, she turned suddenly into a house, and without seeing him, slammed the door in his face.

Kalt. Or rather pretended not to see him. Girls have their eyes about them, Captain.

Cas. Well, that was his opinion; for scarcely had the lovely creature entered her chamber, than she took her station at the window.

Kalt. He followed her up stairs, laid his hand on his heart, sighed, swore, and all the et cetera's followed?

Cas. No—for at that time of day he might have been seen, and the affair have reached the General's ears. The officer in question took a wiser course. After having calculated the height of the window, he quitted his post of observation, went home, waited till midnight, then returned, scaled the bed-room window, and penetrated her apartment, which was lighted by the feeble flickering of a night lamp.

Kalt. The devil! That was an audacious attempt. I should have set that down as one of your own, Captain.

Cas. The comrade is an aspirant, who has adopted me as his model.

Kalt. Well, there he is, fairly in at the bed-room window.

Cas. The sound of a light breath attracted his steps towards the alcove, the flickering light revealed to him the

glimpse of a snowy arm reposing over the edge of the bed, to which was appended a hand, that seemed earnestly to say—

Kalt. I know all about it. Our camp of an officer replied in double quick time.

Cas. And in his careless haste upset a chair.

Kalt. The young girl opened her eyes—

Cas. No—but the clatter awoke some one in the neighbouring room, and he quickly escaped as he had entered, by the bed-room window, then hastened to us to relate his adventure—

Kalt. To you?

Cas. And three or four others, who had met to pass the night together. He took the liberty, however, of altering his denouement, and making it more flattering to his vanity, otherwise, the laugh would have been against him.

Kalt. What, did he dare to asperse—

Cas. He could not make himself a laughing-stock, you know. However, to complete the adventure, my comrade lost his sword knot in the descent.

Kalt. The devil he did! If it should be missed—

Cas. It is not that he has any apprehension about, for he has already replaced it, but it might be taken to the General, who had strictly ordered us all to remain at home last night. You may imagine what a storm would burst over our heads in such a case.

Kalt. I shudder to think of it. Yet, it would be well deserved.

Cas. Thanks to you. However, it will not have the chance. I'll show you the bed-room window the officer got in at.

Kalt. Has he shown it to you, then?

Cas. To me and to the others. This devilish sword knot might compromise us all—but, as a native of the place, you may help us through the scrape. Make some excuse for calling at the house, and claim the sword knot. Do me this favour in return for the liberty which I procure you.

Kalt. Certainly, Captain—it's no more than fair.

Enter BERTHA.

Ber. Ah, here you are, at last! I've been watching for you more than an hour.

Kalt. Ah, is it possible? Bertha, is it you?

Cas. Zounds, this is the very girl herself, and Kalt's intended, too.

Ber. Is it I? Why, to be sure it is. Who else would

you have it? Why, you are not changed a bit. Yes, a little. (*Turns him round.*) I think you are rather better looking—but I don't know that you ought to look so well. You haven't fretted much at absence, it seems.

Kalt. Well, and you look none the worse for it—but how is it I find you here? You guessed we should stop here, and so came to wait?

Ber. Yes—I have been here with grandmother these seven weeks. She often talked of you, and that helped the time along.

Kalt. You, dear Bertha! If it wasn't for the presence of a third person, wouldn't I give you a kiss.

Ber. If you were like me, you would have eyes for your intended only, and never see a third person at all.

Kalt. You are right, Bertha, and I will, too. (*To Casimir.*) Excuse me, Captain—will you look another way? (*Kisses Bertha.*)

Cas. Oh, certainly. (*Aside.*) If he knew that I'm the officer, and she's the girl?

Kalt. Come, one more, Bertha.

Ber. No, no—if the sweetheart runs away with all, there'll be none left for the wife.

Kalt. Bless you, I've an inexhaustible store. By the way, allow me—(*Introduces Captain.*) This is my Captain. Captain, I have the honour to present to you my bride.

Cas. As agreeable as she is lovely. You are not jealous at the compliment, I hope?

Kalt. As coming from you, Captain, certainly not. After the ceremony, I'll allow you a kiss of the bride—I shall have the right to do so then, but I have none before.

Ber. I hope you have got your discharge.

Cas. The General will give it him presently.

Ber. I wish he'd be quick about it—we want to be married at once.

Kalt. (*To Casimir.*) Yes, that we do. You hear? Isn't she a love of a creature? I don't see why I shouldn't marry her this very day.

Ber. Nor I—there's nothing to hinder it: all is prepared, and we were only waiting for you.

Kalt. Delightful surprise! The General must look sharp, then.

Cas. I'll go to him myself, and bring you your discharge. (*Aside.*) After my last night's freak, it's the least I can do.

Kalt. You will? Well, that is kind, Captain—I really feel ashamed at deserting you.

Ber. You do, sir?

Kalt. That is, I should, if it were not to marry you. But a thought has just struck me—suppose we all three go to the Baron, and invite him to the wedding?

Ber. Lor! Yes, suppose we do? Besides, I have something to say to the General myself.

Kalt. The devil you have! What about, pray?

Ber. Merely to ask him if he knows a person, who I don't doubt is in a little bit of trouble just now.

Kalt. Trouble? What about?

Ber. About a sword knot.

Kalt. A sword-knot?

Cas. (*Aside.*) The devil!

Ber. One that some officer lost in the street last night.

Kalt. And do you know the person who found it?

Ber. I rather think so, for I happened to find it myself, when I opened the door this morning. (*Points.*) There it lay, exactly under my bed-room window. (*Goes into house to fetch it.*)

Kalt. (*Stammering.*) Under her h-h-bed-room w-w-window? The—the—the—sword-knot? Phoo! It can't be!

Cas. (*Aside.*) Poor fellow! I begin to wish myself at the devil.

Ber. (*Enters with sword-knot.*) See—here it is (*Kalt tries to speak, but rage stifles his words.*) Well, what are you stammering at, I wonder?

Cas. (*Aside to him.*) Command yourself. You see, she knows nothing about it.

Kalt. (*Stammering.*) I stammer? I don't stammer but if I did? Surprise! joy! (*Tries to laugh.*) Guns and drums! I shall go mad!

Ber. Kalt, you were perhaps commissioned to find it?

Kalt. Just so—I was.

Ber. Then I'm sure you'll experience a double pleasure in receiving it from my hands.

Kalt. Yes, yes—as you say, a double—(*Aside, with rage.*) Damnation!

Ber. We had better take it to the General at once.

Cas. Not for the world—it would get the owner into a serious scrape.

Kalt. (*Takes it.*) I'll restore it to him. In the meantime, go you and let your grandmother know of my arrival.

Ber. She knows of it already.

Kalt. Never mind—announce it—break it to her gradually, very gradually. Now, do go, there's a good girl, and do as I tell you.

Ber. Well, as you wish it I will, but remember, I shall not be long.
(*Exit into house, L. H.*)

Kalt. Well, Captain?

Cas. Poor Kalt! I am very sorry I told you a word of this unlucky affair—yet it's a matter of little or no consequence after all.

Kalt. Of little or no consequence? Your friend—he penetrated into Bertha's room, and gazed upon her in her sleep—more than I ever dared to think, much less to do. His name?

Cas. His name? For what?

Kalt. For a matter of little or no consequence, as you just observed—merely that we may fight till he kills me or I kill him.

Cas. Fight with your superior officer?

Kalt. Not a bit of it. You are about to give me my discharge—rank and superiority will then have vanished into air. So now, Captain, if you please, his name? His life or mine!

Cas. But can I, ought I, to give up the name you demand?

Kalt. Well, perhaps not—it would be betraying a comrade. I don't ask it of you, then, I have another and a surer means of finding my enemy out.

Cas. What means?

Kalt. If I take the sword-knot to your uncle, he'll not be long in finding out the owner's name.

Cas. Would you punish him thus severely for a moment's youthful levity? Besides, your bride is innocent—I know she is.

Kalt. You know it—so do I. But the others, before whom, to save himself from being laughed at, he invented an infamous lie—do they know it? No—in their eyes she is compromised and dishonoured. Captain, I do your friend too great an honour in crossing swords with him, for he is unworthy his rank—he is a coward! (*Crosses to R. H.*)

Cas. A coward?

Kalt. A coward! Once more—his name, Captain. Who is he?

Cas. Well, as you insist, he whom you call a coward, is—(*A pause.*) No, I will not tell you now, Kalt—you are yet a soldier—you would insult him, and get yourself shot—but I give you my word of honour, that the moment you have received your discharge, I will reveal to you his name.

Kalt. Thank you, Captain. I'll go and prepare my seconds—that will not take long. I'll engage those who were to be the witnesses of my marriage. (*Exit R. H.*)

Enter BERTHA, from cottage, L. H.

Ber. What, gossiping here all this time?

Enter BARON, R. H. and crosses to G.

Bar. So you have returned then, Captain?

Cas. Yes, General, to claim your promise.

Bar. Promise? What promise?

Ber. (*Advancing.*) I know, General—it's in a matter that personally concerns me—

Bar. You?

Ber. And my husband. I am engaged to Joseph Kalt. He has been waiting to be made a happy man these seven weeks. It's impossible for him to wait any longer, and if you please, General, I'm almost tired to death waiting so long.

Bar. Oh, if that's all, you may set your mind at ease on the subject now.

Ber. May I? Thank you, General—thank you. (*Curties.*)

Bar. Yes, perfectly at ease. Kalt's discharge is out of all question—he must remain in the ranks.

Ber. (*Stupified.*) Remain in the ranks?

Cas. But you promised—

Bar. More than I could perform. I have received orders from the field marshal to keep all the regiments full, and to grant no discharge on whatever pretence.

Ber. (*Cries.*) Oh, this is abominable! Do you think the girls of the place will put up with it? My husband was only lent, lent to you for three years, and he has been seven weeks, one day, two hours, and forty-four seconds over his time. Discharge him, General—discharge him at once, or I'll muster all the girls in the village to come and scratch your eyes out.

Cas. General, I gave my word of honour to Kalt—if I fail in it, he will have the right to reproach and insult me.

Bar. Let him do so—he shall be instantly shot.

Ber. Shot? And is it by shooting your men, then, that you mean to keep your regiments full?

Bar. Oh, we'll soon find a substitute.

Ber. A substitute? Well, why not let us find one now?

Cas. True—why not, General? Thus you will obey the marshal's orders, and keep up your complement of men.

Bar. Well, be it so. Produce a man equal to him—brave, good looking, and an apt soldier—do this within an hour, and Kalt is free. (*Exit R. H. gates.*)

Ber. You are making fools of us, General. An hour to

And such a man as Kalt? Where is he, I should like to know?

Cas. Much may be done with money—take this pocket-book, it contains notes to the amount of six hundred florins—offer them as a bounty.

Ber. What, do men sell themselves, then?

Cas. In all ranks—the only difference is in the price. (*Gives money.*) Should you fail in finding a substitute within the hour, I promise to procure one for you.

(*Exit n. h. gates.*)

Ber. Well, a willing young man is now to be found, and within an hour. The recruiting Captain may not be so hard to please as the General. Then the bounty—six hundred florins—it gives me confidence. I'll ask the first man I meet.

Enter FRANZ, U. S. L. H.

Franz. Here I am, Miss Bertha. Is everything ready? Shall I go and fetch Clara? Yes, I'm glad of that.

Ber. (*Aside.*) Franz! I've a good mind—Yes, I'll ask him—I'll pop the question to him at once.

Franz. But you don't tell me—is it to take place immediately?

Ber. What?

Franz. What? There's a question. Why, your wedding, to be sure. It seems it is, for Kalt came to fetch me. He said I must be present, and the affair would come off immediately. I wish my affair would come off immediately. But, really his joy has quite turned his head, for he told me it was to take place in the moat under the ramparts. Now, who ever heard of a wedding being celebrated in a ditch?

Ber. (*Aside.*) How to break it to him? Psha! I'll do it at once. (*Aloud.*) Well, now, isn't it strange, that plain as the fact is, it never struck me before—

Franz. (*Knowingly.*) Why, didn't it strike you, then? No? Well, that is strange. But what fact do you mean?

Ber. That you are really a very good-looking young man.

Franz. Lor! Didn't it, though? Where have your eyes been all these years, then?

Ber. I declare I'm surprised! Turn about, and let me look at you (*He does so, grotesquely.*) Again—turn again.

Franz. There! Do you want me to jump higher still?

Ber. (*Aside.*) A good compact figure—

Franz. Yes, I flatter myself there remarkably compact.

Ber. A martial air, an engaging countenance, and a most bewitching leer.

Franz. Don't, don't—you make me blush. (*Laughs.*)

Ber. Such harmony between the carriage and the figure.

Franz. They ought to agree—they have been inseparable for years. If Miss Clara could only hear you, she'd never be able to cry me down any more.

Ber. Cry you down? You, a man fit for anything—ay, even to be a soldier. Why, you are fit to supply the place of the best man in the regiment—even of Kalt himself.

Franz. Supply Kalt's place! (*Aside.*) She wants to cut him, then, and marry me. My merits are being acknowledged at last. (*Aloud.*) Thank you, Miss Bertha, for your very kind attention, but if I am rather irresistible, still I'm a man of principle. I've given my word to your cousin.

Ber. But—

Franz. No buts.

Ber. I say, unfortunately, you meet with a poor return. Yet nothing is easier than to make her desperately in love with you, and if you like, I'll tell you how.

Franz. If I like? I believe I just should like. How—how?

Ber. There's no way so sure with us girls as to flatter our vanity. Now, what's a peasant, or a local militia man? A nothing at all—a mere nobody!

Franz. Lor! do you think so? Am I nobody, then? I'm somebody at home.

Ber. I'm only saying what everybody thinks and says. Now, a soldier—a real soldier, like Kalt, is the delight and admiration of all girls who have any pretension to taste.

Franz. Lor! Is he, though?

Ber. Is he not! All you want to make my cousin desperately in love with you, is the uniform of a rifleman of the Tyrol, and three years service like Kalt.

Franz. If I could only be sure of that—

Ber. Sure? Why, it's your last resource, and the trial would cost you nothing.

Franz. It would cost me three years of my life, and all the inconveniences of the profession.

Ber. But a bounty of six hundred florins would sweeten the sour, wouldn't it?

Franz. Six hundred florins, and Clara's desperate love? I'll think of it.

Ber. There's no time for thought. Now's your time, or never—so take the chance at once, or leave it to another.

Franz. But will you engage, that after three years service, your cousin shall be desperately in love with me?

Ber. She can't fail. But time presses—be quick: (*Gives*

pocket book.) Run to the recruiting captain, and get on the uniform. Oh, won't my cousin do it on you then!

Frenz. I will. Thank you, Miss Bertha, for putting me up to the dodge. A soldier! Zounds, I'll carry Clara off at the bayonet's point! (*Exit U. E. L. H.*)

Ber. What a good fellow! I hope the captain will accept him, and leave me my husband. Six hundred florins is an excellent bargain, I'm sure.

Enter BARON, R. H.

Bar. Well, my lass, have you found your substitute?

Ber. Yes, General—an excellent substitute—a superb fellow—one who has already served in the local militia.

Bar. Well, I don't wonder at Kalt's impatience for his discharge—his dilemma is painful, I admit.

Ber. What could be worse, General? A bride ready and willing, and not able to take her.

Bar. A foe to chastise, and unable to meet him.

Ber. A foe to chastise?

Bar. As I just heard from one of the seconds. Kalt, it seems, has received some serious injury from one of my officers, and it would please me mightily, did the disbanded soldier administer a useful lesson to the offender.

Ber. Is it possible that Kalt wants his discharge merely to fight?

Bar. For no other purpose, I assure you.

Ber. And you approve of his proceeding?

Bar. With all my heart, when it is no longer my duty to prevent it.

Ber. And am I to run the risk of becoming a widow before I am married?

Bar. It's a glorious thing, my lass, to be the widow of a brave man.

Ber. I don't want the glory—I want my husband—and I've been at all this trouble to find him a substitute.

Kalt. (Enters.) A substitute? What, for me?

Bar. Certainly. It was necessary, as a superior order forbade your discharge. But, thanks to your bride, you are now on the point of quitting the service.

Kalt. What, Bertha! my dear Bertha, do I owe this favour to you? (*About to kiss her.*)

Bar. Halt! Attention! Stand at ease! (*They all do so.*)

Ber. And you thank me for it, do you?

Kalt. Thank you most heartily, and shall love you ever. 'Tis liberty you give girl.

Ber. Indeed I do. I can't give it to you, neither can

the General—he has no right. You have three years more to serve—that's the law, and I hope, General, you'll stick to it. Keep him up to the latest moment, and though I die an old maid, terrible as the fate is, keep him in the ranks that he may have no chance of fighting his duel.

Kalt. But as I have a substitute——

Ber. The General won't accept him.

Bar. You told me just now that he was unexceptionable.

Ber. (*Crosses to c.*) Did I? Then I told a fib. He was going to be married then, not to fight. But I'll tell you the truth now. The substitute I have provided for him, is that local militia man, that you caued the other day, General.

Bar. (*c.*) What, that joker?

Kalt. Discipline will soon form him, General.

Ber. He's a coward!

Kalt. Men never flinch in the ranks.

Ber. He's an ugly brute!

Kalt. So much the better—he'll scare the enemy.

Ber. He's too short.

Kalt. He'll grow taller, and not so easy to hit.

Bar. Confound you both! Will you have done?

Kalt. No—you cannot refuse my discharge.

Ber. If he fights he may be killed.

Kalt. (*To Baron.*) If I do not fight, she is dishonoured.

Ber. Don't listen to him—he is trying to influence you.

Bar. Go to the devil, the pair of you, do!

Ber. It's all over! I'm a luckless maiden widow.

Enter FRANZ.

Kalt. (*To Franz.*) Ah, my dear, good, kindest, best of friends!

Franz. I've been to the recruiting captain.

Bar. Well?

Franz. He has refused me—said I was an ass, and told me to go home and hatch eggs.

Kalt and Ber. Refused?

Bar. I don't wonder at it.

Ber. And quite right too. Oh, how glad I am! I was sure he'd never accept of a fright like you, in the place of such a man as Kalt.

Franz. I a fright? Just now you said I was an angel. No reflection on my personal appearance, Miss Bertha, if you please—the captain made none. If he refused me, it was only because he had already accepted another.

Ber. Another!

Cas. With the six hundred florins, which I gave as her dower.

Bar. (To Casimir.) You're a wicked rascal! Here's your sword-knot.

Kalt. Don't lose it again, Captain.

Bar. Nor let your vanity lead you to intrude where you are not sure of a welcome. Gentlemen, the sword-knot may serve you as a lesson. Ladies, when you have fastened the door at night, don't forget to turn the catch of the Bed-room Window.

THE CURTAIN FALLS.